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ZNR UUUUU ZZH
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FM AMEMBASSY DHAKA
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INFO RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 9396
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA 1034
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 0324
RUEHGO/AMEMBASSY RANGOON 2614
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RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0596
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0046
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
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RUEKDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC

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DEPT FOR SES-O
DEPT FOR SCA/PB, SCA/EX
DCHA/OFDA FOR ROBERT THAYER
AID/W FOR AA MARK WARD AND ANE ANNE DIX
DCHA/FFP FOR MATTHEW NIMS AND PAUL NOVICK
ROME FOR FODAG
BANGKOK FOR RDM/A TOM DOLAN, ROB BARTON
KATHMANDU FOR USAID OFDA BILL BERGER AND SUE MCINTYRE
TREASURY FOR ELIZABETH WEISS AND SUSAN CHUN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [AMGT](#) [SOCI](#) [ECON](#) [PINR](#) [EAGR](#) [SENV](#)
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SUBJECT: USAID/OFDA Cyclone Sidr Situation Report #7: USAID/DART
Assessment of Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Conditions in Dublar
Char, Khulna Division

11. Summary. In conjunction with USAID/Bangladesh and the Government of Bangladesh's (GOB) Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE), USAID's Disaster Response Team (USAID/DART) assessed water, sanitation, and hygiene conditions in Dublar Char, Khulna Division, which the Bangladesh military identified as critically water insecure. The USAID/DART reported that the Bangladesh navy has successfully met the immediate water needs of cyclone-affected populations in Dublar Char. Additionally, the USAID/DART did not observe prevalent gaps in other humanitarian sectors, including food, shelter, health, and livelihoods. Humanitarian indicators and conditions are at pre-cyclone levels. The USAID/DART recommends medium to long-term interventions to improve water, sanitation, and hygiene conditions in Dublar Char. End Summary.

IMPACT OF CYCLONE SIDR ON DUBLAR CHAR, KHULNA DIVISION

12. The Bangladesh military identified Dublar Char, Shoron Khola, Galachipa, Kalapara, and Barguna as the five most water insecure areas due to the impact of Cyclone Sidr. On November 28, the USAID/DART's water, sanitation, and hygiene advisor and information officer, together with USAID/Bangladesh and DPHE, traveled to Dublar Char to evaluate emergency water needs and identify possible gaps in humanitarian assistance. The Bangladesh navy escorted the assessment team around the island and provided comprehensive information regarding the water situation.

13. Dublar Char, a low-lying island that forms the outermost area of the Sundarbans Region, is approximately 80 square kilometers and comprises 9 smaller islands. Dublar Char houses no permanent inhabitants; rather, 20,000 to 25,000 migratory fishermen come seasonally between the months of October and February. Nearly the entire population is adult male. The USAID/DART identified this population as non-vulnerable, resilient, and physically strong. The residents of Dublar Char face perennial flooding and have accordingly developed strong coping mechanisms. Traditional examples include the burying of personal assets, such as jerry cans and dry fruit, in preparation for cyclones and floods.

14. The Bangladesh navy reported the death of approximately 250 people in Dublar Char due to the impact of Cyclone Sidr. To prepare for and mitigate the effects of cyclones, the GOB has built five cyclone shelters that can each house 2,000 people in the most extreme conditions. Heavy rains and storm surge from Cyclone Sidr destroyed more than 200 homes on the island. However, residents immediately built new temporary houses by salvaging shelter materials and wood from damaged trees.

USAID/DART OBSERVATIONS

15. The USAID/DART observed that emergency water needs are being met. A GOB barge moored directly off of the coast carries 480 metric tons of clean water, where fishermen can travel via boat to fill their jerry cans with safe drinking water. A Bangladesh navy ship also positioned off of the coast maintains large water reservoirs and bottles of water. The USAID/DART commended the Bangladesh navy in meeting the emergency water needs of cyclone-affected

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populations. International donors are also providing water assistance in Dublar Char, as the Japan International Cooperation Agency has provided five small-scale water purification filters and several storage bladders. Furthermore, the temporary residents of the island have begun re-digging shallow wells and re-using traditional surface water sources, such as ponds.

16. The USAID/DART reported that the impact of Cyclone Sidr did not significantly disrupt livelihoods, as residents of Dublar Char almost immediately recommenced fishing activities. Likewise, these populations do not face food insecurity due to the successful resumption of fishing.

17. Due to the temporary nature of the community living in Dublar Char, a methodical sanitation system was not in place prior to the cyclone. Nevertheless, the Bangladesh navy reported no water-borne disease outbreaks due to poor water, sanitation, and hygiene conditions. Similarly, a permanent healthcare system did not exist preceding the cyclone. The Bangladesh navy indicated the need for more long-term health support and surveillance information on diarrhea and other water-borne diseases like cholera.

USAID/DART RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

18. No further humanitarian assistance is required in Dublar Char, as the GOB and Bangladesh navy are successfully meeting emergency needs. The USAID/DART concludes that island residents south of the Sundarbans do not face critical humanitarian challenges, since populations of Dublar Char exemplify small, transitory fishing communities throughout the area.

19. Although immediate needs are being met, the USAID/DART recommends medium to long-term interventions to improve water, sanitation, and hygiene conditions in Dublar Char, including the development of large-diameter, protected shallow wells with sufficient storage capacity to serve large populations. To improve this water supply, the USAID/DART recommends temporary water treatment and pumping systems during the fishing season.

¶10. For future flood and cyclone responses, the USAID/DART encourages the stockpiling of water tablets for short-term, household water purification needs in the region.

¶11. To help reduce future cyclone-related death tolls, the USAID/DART recommends the construction of additional cyclone shelters in Dublar Char.

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